GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2777
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2007
HINDI AS AN UN OFFICIAL LANGUAGE
Mehta Shri Bhubneshwar Prasad

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the effective measures taken or proposed to be taken to make Hindi as an official language of the United Nations Organisation;

(b) whether the permanent Secretariat of the Vishwa Hindi Sammelan and the Hindi Secretariat located at Mauritius have started their work in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the efforts made or proposed to be made to use Hindi in the Indian embassies abroad?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

(a) A high level Committee under the Chairmanship of External Affairs Minister was constituted on 26th February, 2003 followed by a sub-Committee under the chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs in August, 2003 and a core-group headed by the Additional Secretary (Administration) in the Ministry of External Affairs in September, 2003 to look into this matter and take necessary measures. An Advocacy Paper to present the Indian case with regard to introducing Hindi in the UN was prepared. The procedure for getting any language recognised as one of the Official Languages of the UN involves obtaining approval of the General Assembly to amend Rule-51 of the Rules of Procedure. Such a proposal has to be approved by more than half of the members of the General Assembly. In addition, recognising any language as the official language of the UN entails a substantial increase in the expenditure of the UN necessitating an enhanced contribution by every member country, which is why many members remain reluctant to support such a proposal.

(b) & (c) A meeting of the Executive Board of the Secretariat was held in Mauritius on 24-25 May 2007. The Secretariat will start functioning formally only after the Budget of the Secretariat is approved by the Governing Council. The Secretariat would be responsible for organising World Hindi Conferences. There is no separate Secretariat for World Hindi Conference.

(d) Indian Embassies/High Commissions abroad make use of Hindi in their official work to the extent possible, given the fact that they have to deal mostly with the local governments. Hindi is generally used during interaction with people of Indian community. Indian Missions abroad also organise Hindi related activities from time to time in association with local educational institutions and voluntary organisations. In addition, they also celebrate Hindi Diwas on 14th September and World Hindi Day on 10th January every year.